



Renison University College
Department of Social Development Studies
Positive Psychology, PSYCH 226R (Section 002)
Fall 2014
Wednesday 6:30 – 9:30 pm Room: REN 0403

Instructor: Dr. Courtney Plante

Office: PAS 3240F

Office Hours: Monday / Wednesday, 2:30 – 3:30, or by appointment

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Course Description

This course will focus on the nature of happiness and the good life from a positive psychology perspective. This course will cover a range of topics including: well-being, emotions, motivation, relationships, mindfulness, engagement, wisdom, and optimal functioning.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Through lectures, discussions, videos, and activities students will:

- A. gain an understanding of positive psychological concepts
- B. have the opportunity to experience and apply positive psychological concepts and principles to personal growth and well-being
- C. become familiar with the methodologies used in the scientific study of positive psychology
- D. learn to think critically and analytically about issues related to positive psychology

Required Text

- Compton, W.C. & Hoffman, E. (2013). *Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness and Flourishing*, 2nd edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Online Information

The class website on [Learn](#) will be used for a variety of purposes including access to class resources (e.g., syllabus, lecture slides), dropboxes for submitting assignments, course grades, and class announcements. It will be your responsibility to check this website regularly.

Lecture slides will be posted by 6pm the day before lecture to help you with your note-taking. However, I recommend that you take your own notes as much as possible; research shows that people have greater memory for the material when they take their own notes. To do well in this course, I strongly recommend you attend all lectures. While there will be overlap between the textbook and the lectures, I will also be presenting material not covered in your textbook and will expand on important points in the text

**Please also sign up for a free account at www.authentic happiness.org. Periodically you will be asked to complete online surveys that are relevant to this course. It is recommended you do the surveys prior to class so that you are prepared to discuss them.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Test 1	October 8	23%
Test 2	November 5	23%
Test 3	November 26	23%
Journals	October 15 & November 19	10%
Reflection Paper	December 3	21%
Research Participation	November 26	2% bonus
Total		100% + 2%

Tests

There will be 3 term tests that are non-cumulative. Test 1 will be based Lectures 1-4 and Chapters 1-4. Test 2 will be based on Lectures 5-8 and Chapters 5-8. Test 3 will be based on Lectures 9-11 and Chapters 9-11. Each test will have 35 multiple choice questions and 3 short answer questions. You will have up to 80 minutes to complete these exams.

Journals

Each week you will choose one of two / three reflective activities to complete. These might include keeping a gratitude journal, practicing mindfulness meditation, or interviewing an elderly relative who you believe possesses wisdom. These exercises are designed to help you apply positive psychology constructs to your own life, self-reflect in a meaningful way, and gain insight into the mechanisms and processes of the good life.

You will write about your experience and reflect on any insights you gained. You may wish to include pictures, videos, poetry, music, or web links that demonstrate your experience with the topic. You can do these in a Word or PDF document, or in blog form (instructions provided in Learn).

Two times during the term you will submit your journals me so that I can check them for completion. Submissions must be received by midnight on the due dates. Each submission will cover five weeks' worth of activities. I will evaluate them based on a pass/fail criteria; that is, you will receive 1% for each of the 10 activities as long as you have made a reasonable effort to complete it.

Dates for submission: Wednesday October 15 (weeks 1-5) and Wednesday November 19 (weeks 6-10)

Reflection Paper

For the final paper you will choose one of the topics covered in the course. You will need to find at least 3 scholarly journal articles on the topic, review the scientific evidence, integrate it with your personal experience, and make suggestions for future research. The paper should be no more than 5 pages double-spaced. More details will be posted on Learn.

Date for submission: December 3

Research Participation

Since experiential learning is a highly valued component of psychology, you can earn up to 2% in bonus marks for participating in psychology experiments relating to social, personality, and clinical psychology.

If you do not wish to participate in research, as an alternative you may submit short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of positive psychology journal articles. Each review counts as one percentage point. You should e-mail me your chosen article to get approval before writing the review. These reviews are due the last day of lectures (November 26). More information on both forms of extra credit is posted at the end of this syllabus.

Schedule

Date	Week	Topic	Reading
Sept. 10	1	Introduction to Positive Psychology	Chapter 1
		Strengths and Emotions	Chapter 2: pg 23-33
Sept. 17	2	Motivation	Chapter 2: pg 33-42
		The Nature and Measurement of Well-Being	Chapter 2: pg 42-48 Chapter 3: pg 51-54
Sept. 24	3	Subjective Well-Being	Chapter 3: pg 54-76
		Leisure, Flow, and Peak Performance	Chapter 4: pg 79-90, 94-99
Oct. 1	4	Mindfulness and Meditation	Chapter 4: pg 90-94 Chapter 6: pg 143-144
		Love and Marriage	Chapter 5: 101-108
Oct. 8	5	Test 1	Chapters 1-4
		Relationship Satisfaction	Chapter 5: 108-125
Oct. 15	6	Health and Wellness	Chapter 6: 127-137
		Coping and Longevity	Chapter 6: 137-142, 145-149
		Journal Due	Weeks 1-5
Oct. 22	7	Excellence and Aesthetics	Chapter 7: pg 153-163
		Creativity and Genius	Chapter 7: pg 164-174
Oct. 29	8	Well-Being Across the Lifespan	Chapter 8: pg 177-195
		Wisdom and Authenticity	Chapter 9: pg 199-206, 209-214
Nov. 5	9	Test 2	Chapters 5-8
		Optimal Personality	Chapter 9: pg 206-209, 214-226
Nov. 12	10	Religion, Spirituality, & Well-Being	Chapter 10: pg 229-257
Nov. 19	11	Work and Engagement	Chapter 11: pg 259-269
		Communities and Culture	Chapter 11: pg 269-280
		Journal Due	Weeks 6-10
Nov. 26	12	Test 3	Chapters 9-11
		Last Day for Research Participation	
Dec. 3	13	Reflection Paper Due	

Late Work

You are responsible for informing the instructor in advance if you are unable to complete an assignment or test by the scheduled date. Missed due dates are only acceptable in the case of medical problems (with a medical note) and for serious compassionate reasons.

Difficulty with assignments is not a sufficient reason for an extension. Any student who finds himself/herself struggling with an assignment during the term is encouraged to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss strategies for success. It is important to begin assignments well in advance of the due date in case of problems.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course. Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo> for more information.

Electronic Device Policy

Ringling cell phones are a disruption during lecture, as is leaving the room to accept a cell phone call during class (even if the ringer is off). Cell phones must be turned off during lectures.

Accommodation for Illness or Unforeseen Circumstances:

The instructor follows the practices of the University of Waterloo in accommodating students who have documented reasons for missing quizzes or exams. You can read the policy at http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/students/accom_illness.html. If you miss a test, there will be no make-up. Instead, the weight of the missed test will be spread across the other two tests.

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Grievance

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70) (<https://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>). In addition, consult <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes> for the Faculty of Arts' grievance processes. When in doubt please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>.

Appeals

A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71, Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72, Student Appeals <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

Note for Students with Disabilities

The AccessAbility Services, (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

A respectful living and learning environment for all.

1. It is expected that everyone living, learning or working on the premises of Renison University College will contribute to an environment of tolerance and respect by treating others with sensitivity and civility.
2. Harassment is unwanted attention in the form of jokes, insults, gestures, gossip, or other behaviours that are meant to intimidate. Some instances of harassment are against the law in addition to Renison University College policy.
3. Discrimination is treating people differently because of their race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, colour, age, creed, marital status, or other personal characteristics. The Ontario Human Rights Code considers actions and behaviours rather than intentions.
4. If you experience or witness either harassment or discrimination, you may contact the Renison University College Harassment and Discrimination Officer at mmalton@uwaterloo.ca (519-884-4404, ext. 28628).

**Research Experience Marks
Information and Guidelines**

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 2%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 2% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

Educational focus of participation in research

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation in LAB studies is worth 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each 30-minutes of participation. Participation in ONLINE studies is worth .25 credits for each 15-minutes of participation. Researchers will record student's participation and will advise the course instructor of the total credits earned by each student at the end of the term.

How to participate?

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. You must get started early in the term.

[INSTRUCTIONS/DATES/DEADLINES: How to log in to Sona and sign up for studies](#)

**** Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website.****

More information about the REG program is available at:

[REG Participants' Homepage](#)

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **Be submitted before the [last day of lectures](#). Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.